Light of the East Series, No. 12

MICHAEL D. LYONS, S. J.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

ARGUMENTS, TEACHINGS, PRACTICES

Light of the East Office, 30, Park Street, Calcutta

THE LIGHT OF THE EAST

A MONTHLY PAPER ON CATHOLIC RELIGION
AND EASTERN THOUGHT

Yearly Subscription **One Rupee**
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Presented by S. Murugappa

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INTRODUCTION

" There is not," wrote the non-Catholic historian Macaulay, " and there never was on this earth a work of human policy so well deserving of examination as the Roman Catholic Church......The proudest royal houses are but of yesterday when compared with the line of the Supreme Pontiffs......The Papacy remains not in decay, not a mere antique, but full of life and youthful vigour......She saw the commencement of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world, and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all." No educated man can afford to be ignorant of the Catholic Church. She is too big, too influential, and too unique to be overlooked.

The Catholic Church headed by the Pope of Rome has more adherents than any other single religious body in the world, 352,000,000 in 1931. There is hardly a port in the world in which the traveller will fail to find a Catholic church and priest; there is not a nation on the globe that has not listened at some time or other to the missionaries of the Catholic Church, and has not seen at least some of its citizens bow their heads for the waters of Catholic baptism.

Being so widespread, the Catholic Church is probably the most influential religious body of all. She possesses not merely geographical universality, but counts her

members among all classes of men, among the poorest labourers and the richest capitalists, among the savages of the remotest islands and the leading professors of the greatest universities. She not only preaches, but helps mankind by deeds in the many great Catholic welfare organizations, in which millions of Catholics are engaged, including 350,000 religious women bound by vows to devote their whole lives without recompense to works of charity and education. Her influence cannot be measured, so great is it. ...

The Catholic Church is unique, because her educated and thinking members hold even more tenaciously, if possible, than her other members to a literal interpretation of her doctrines, including such dogmas, so unpopular with the so-called modern mind, as the reality of hell fire and the real divinity of the historical Christ. She is also unique because she alone manages to remain unchanged in a rapidly changing world, standing out amidst the crashing ruins of modern European civilization in a manner which leads many to think that she is perhaps destined to pass on the torch of learning through other Dark Ages. Regardless of what one may be inclined to believe about the Catholic Church, one must certainly have at least some knowledge about her if he wishes to be considered well-educated.

This little work attempts the ambitious programme of supplying this information by giving some outline of the principal arguments for the truth of the Catholic Church,

some of the most striking teachings and deeds of Jesus Christ, and the main beliefs and practices of Catholics. Necessarily, everything has been treated very briefly. The candidate for priestly ordination in the Catholic Church must spend not less than six years of graduate study on Catholic teachings, and if he should wish to take every course on the Catholic religion given at the larger universities, he would require some twenty years. It is evident, then, that in these few pages one can get no more than a skeleton outline of the subject.

It is hoped, however, that what follows will furnish orientation for those who desire to learn more about the Catholic Church. For the convenience of such readers a short bibliography of useful Catholic books has been added.

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THE TRUTH OF CATHOLICISM

The Church a Teacher

Catholics regard the Catholic Church as their divine teacher speaking in God's name and hence infallibly. The faith of Catholics, then, is based not on complicated processes of reasoning about each single point of doctrine, but upon the testimony of God making the revelation of a complete system of doctrine through the Catholic Church. We need, therefore, only ascertain whether the Catholic Church is really divine and infallible, as Catholics claim. Once this is proved all the rest follows, and we need only ask her what we should believe and do. We shall, accordingly, first consider some of the arguments generally brought forth to justify the Catholic position.

God—Religion denotes the relation of man to God. The first step towards any religious belief, then, must be to show the reasonableness of believing in the existence of of God.

God Exists

That God exists is a truth so clearly established and so widely accepted that we need not delay long in proving it. Modern research has failed to discover any race or tribe that has been without some belief in a Supreme Deity. Scientists and other leaders too of the world's thought, with very few exceptions, have always believed in the existence of God. Among such believers we may count Newton, Pasteur, Faraday, Kelvin, Maxwell, Lodge, Thomson,

Roentgen, and Marconi. A recent conscientious inquiry has shown that 330 out of 360 famous men of the last century believed in the existence of God.

This practically universal belief in the existence of God is based on the insufficiency of the world to account for itself. When we find a watch, we realize at once that the watch did not come there by accident, but must have had a maker. Just so, the doctor examining the human eye realizes that there exists a Maker of that eye; the astronomer basing his intricate calculations on the laws of physics pays tribute to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe; the farmer planting his seeds knows that the Giver of Life alone can make his seeds develop into paddy or trees; and the faithful son caring for his aged parents out of a sense of duty proclaims by his action the directing impulses of a Supreme Good One who is Lord of the conscience. To that anomaly, the true atheist, the rest of mankind exclaims with the words of Samkarâcârya, "Look at this world, of which the most ingenious workmen cannot even form a conception in their minds and then say if an unintelligent principle like prime matter is able to fashion it!"

Creation Proclaims God

God can Make a Revelation

Revelation—Being infinitely powerful and infinitely good, God certainly can reveal certain truths to benefit mankind, if He wills to do so. That He should will to do so is quite to be expected, in view of the miserable condition in which mankind finds itself.

If God does make a revelation through certain chosen men, He must give sure signs by which men may know that these revelations are really of divine origin. Prophecies, or predictions of free actions, which can be known only to God, and miracles are such signs. It is impossible that God should allow mankind to be led into error by one who has all the testimonials which men have a right to expect in a genuine messenger of God,—personal holiness of life, a sublime yet reasonable doctrine and true miracles wrought to confirm his mission and doctrine. In these circumstances God cannot allow the larger and saner portion of mankind to be led into invincible error in His name.

Signs of a Revelation

Have these conditions for a genuine revelation to mankind ever been fulfilled? Catholics claim that they have been fulfilled both in the ancient Jewish people and more especially in Christianity.

The sacred books of the Jews contain numerous prophecies about a Messenger from God. Historians tell us that these books were written long before the Christian era. Hence there can be no question of writing the so-called prophecies after the events. These prophecies were all fulfilled in a remarkable manner in Christ, so that thousands of His contemporaries believed in Him when He came. Many detailed circumstances of His birth, teachings, actions, death and glorious resurrection and of the foundation and growth of His spiritual

Prophecies about Christ

Kingdom, the Catholic Church, were foretold by those Jewish prophets in terms so clear that they seem the depositions of eye-witnesses.

The Gospels—Our knowledge of the life and teachings of Christ comes to us largely from the Gospels and other writings of the early disciples. Hence it is important that we should know for sure that these writings really came from Christ's disciples or from those who wrote under their immediate inspiration. That these writings did come from them is proved in two ways, from internal and from external evidence.

Reliability of Information about Christ

The *internal evidence* is borrowed from the sacred books themselves, viz., from the idioms of the language of these writings and from the intimate knowledge the writers showed of the circumstances that existed only at that time and in the country described. Archeologists and philologists could today find flaws in the accounts if they had been written by others of a later date. The pen picture of Christ found in the Gospels and drawn by men, who were by no means masters at writing, is too true in details and too natural to be the result of imagination, no matter how well developed and schooled. In addition, it may be said that the invention by men, so illiterate and uneducated, of such a sublime character as that of Christ would be an even greater wonder than any miracle of the Gospels.

Testimony of Opponents

The external evidence is surprisingly abundant. Celsus, a most bitter opponent of Christianity, who lived about the year 120 A.D., bore excellent witness in his writings to the historicity of the Gospels. Heretical Christians who arose against the Church in the very beginning never dared to deny that the Gospels were written by those who have always been considered their authors, although in many cases it would have suited their purposes to do so if they could. Christian writers of the first and second centuries of the Christian era refer clearly to the Gospels in some fifteen writings that have come down to us.

Documentary Evidence

Pope St. Clement in the year 97 or 98, writing to set the Christians at Corinth in order, supports many of his exhortations and orders by allusions to texts to be found in the Gospels. Other famous documents are the letters of St. Ignatius, a Bishop who was martyred at Rome in the year 107, when more than 90 years old; a letter written by the disciple Barnabas about the year 96, and the Didache, the Teaching of the Twelve, composed between the year 80 and 90. Striking witness is also borne to the authenticity of the Gospels by such men as St. Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons in France, who was a disciple of St. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, who in turn had known St. John, "the beloved Disciple," the author of the fourth Gospel, for the long space of 30 years, and Papias (125), who tells us he knew in person more than one of the Apostles' disciples.

The authors of the Gospels were not deceived, for they wrote about events which took place in broad daylight and were easy to see and comprehend. If they had perchance been deceived, they would have been set right by the Jewish multitudes which witnessed these events and which included many to whose advantage it was to expose the assertions made. They did not deceive others deliberately, for they had nothing to gain and everything to lose by preaching Christianity. They took upon themselves obligations they naturally greatly disliked and suffered many trials for the preaching of the truth they had learned, most of them even undergoing death for the sake of that truth.

Neither Deceived nor Deceiving

That we today possess the texts of the Gospels substantially as they were written is guaranteed by the fact that they were copied and translated by very many individuals at distant places before the death of the generation that had known the Apostles personally. To suppose that all these widely separated manuscripts were afterwards falsified is sheer nonsense.

The scientific evidence for the historicity of the Gospels and other writings of the New Testament of the Bible is conclusive, and few are the real scholars who would today deny this. Of all the books of antiquity there is not one guaranteed by such weight of solid evidence.

Evidence Conclusive

Divinity of Christ—From the Gospels we learn that Christ claimed to be a messenger of God and even the Son of God, true God. He generally acted as God even when He did not explicitly say He was, and frequently hinted at His divinity so clearly that the Jews would exclaim, "Thou makest thyself God!" (John X, 33).

Christ Acted as Cod

In the Gospels written by Saints Matthew, Luke and Mark, it is recorded that Christ said to a paralytic, "Be of good heart, my child; thy sins are forgiven." (Cf. Matthew IX, 1-8; Mark II, 3-12; Luke V, 17-26). Thereupon some critics present thought within themselves, "This man blasphemeth! Who can forgive sin but God alone?" Christ did not deny that God alone could do so, but calmly replied, "That ye may know that the Son of Man" (i. e. Himself) "hath power on earth to forgive sins," (He than turned to the paralytic) "Arise, take up thy bed, and go to thy home." The man was cured, and the critics were silenced.

From this and other incidents we find that Christ did not only act as God but always carefully avoided denying His unique divinity when He was accused of claiming it. Unless He really was God, He was under a serious and fundamental obligation of explaining His words and actions. He might have said that He was divine as every good man can be said to be divine, and in no other way; or that He was divine in the sense that He had received certain divine powers from God and

not more than that. When He asserted, "I and the Father are one" (John X, 30), He could have added, if He meant His statement in a pantheistic sense, "And you too and the Father are one." He did nothing of the kind, but reiterated His claim to a special unique identity with the Father: "Believe the works, that ye may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father" (John X, 38).

Christ not a Pantheist

Christ's reply under oath before the High Priest of His nation (Matthew XXVI, 63 sqq., which is given in chapter three) is especially inexplicable except by supposing that He really was God or that He was either a perfect fool or a base impostor. But it is impossible that the best man who ever lived was either a fool or an impostor; He must have been what He claimed to be. The superficial opinion prevailing in many quarters that Christ was a good and wise man, perhaps the best the world has ever seen, but no more than that, is untenable in the light of Biblical science. Merely a good man He certainly was not. He was either God or not even a good and wise man.

Christ is God

That Christ really was what He claimed to be is best proved from the works to which He appealed (John X, 38). A number of these works or signs proving His claims are related in the third chapter of this booklet, including the greatest of all, the Resurrection, for which even to this day

Christ Showed Signs

no adequate explanation has been found except that it was really a miracle of Christ. Christ's miracles, and above all His Resurrection, so convinced His followers that many thousands of them laid down their lives, in joyful testimony to their belief, in the first centuries of the Christian era. It is for this reason that they are called martyrs, i. e., "witnesses" to the truth of Christianity. We accept, then, the divinity of Christ, and shall hence ask ourselves what He wants us to believe and what He wants us to do.

The Authority of Christ—"The multitudes were astounded at His (Christ's) teaching, for He taught them as one having authority" (Matthew VII, 28, 29). This is not surprising when we consider who Christ was. What may be surprising is the fact that Christ gave His own authority to ordinary mortals. Still, it is not so very surprising when one considers that God took upon Himself human nature. Why is it not possible that God's authority too should be exercised through men? Pride blinds many to the possibility of God's authority being exercised by mere men, but does not this same vice blind many to the possibility of the Incarnation itself? It is not more difficult to believe that God's authority is exercised in a human form than it is to believe that the Son of God assumed human nature.

Christ gave His Authority to Men

Christ's words in delegating his power to others are clear and unmistakable. "As the Father hath sent Me, I

also send you" (John XX, 21). "Whatsoever ye shall bind upon earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose upon earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matthew XVIII, 18). "He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me" (Luke X, 16). See especially the concluding verses of St. Matthew (XXVIII, 18-20), given at the end of chapter three of this booklet. This delegation, it is to be noted, was to last "unto the consummation of the world." (Ibidem)

Scripture Proves This

The earliest Christians understood these words of Christ in the sense in which the Catholic Church takes them, as we know from the earliest Christian writings, Scriptural and otherwise, dating back to the first century of the Christian era. The strong language of St. John, St. Paul, Pope St. Clement of Rome, St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, and the Didache, the Teaching of the Twelve, bears ample witness to this fact.

Earliest Christians Believed This

It is clear, then, that it is supremely important to hear and to obey those who have received this authority from Christ and speak in His name. It remains for us to ask where this body of men exists today.

The Church of Christ—There is only one religious body in the world that goes back in unbroken succession to the days of the Apostles of Christ, the Catholic Church headed by the Pope of Rome. It follows that she

Only Catholic Church is Christ's

alone can be the Church founded by Christ on His Apostles.

All Protestant sects, including the Church of England, which some of its members of recent years have begun to style the English-Catholic Church, are bodies that have broken away either from the Catholic Church or from other bodies that had broken away from her previously. Hence none of them can be the religious body founded by Christ. Neither can the Greek, Russian, Syriac or other so-called national Churches be the Church of Christ, for they too separated from the Catholic Church. Catholics regard them as schismatical, since they once acknowledged the full authority of the Catholic Church.

Other Churches Formed Later

Even if history did not tell us that the Catholic Church alone goes back to the days of Apostles, a comparison of the Church as she exists today with the Church of the Apostles, as existing documents portray her to us, would show conclusively that only the Catholic Church can be the Apostolic Church. The Catholic Church speaks with authority, so did the early Church. The Catholic Church claims to be infallible, as Christ intended His Church to be when He threatened condemnation to those who refused to believe what was taught by the teachers of His Church (Mark XVI, 15,16). Christ's Church was to be headed by one man; only the Catholic Church has one man as supreme head

Catholic Church Same As Apostolic Church

(the Pope), so she alone can be the Church Christ founded (Matthew XVI, 13-19; John XXI, 15-18; Luke, XXII, 32; etc.). The recent discoveries of archæology also demonstrate beyond doubt that only the Catholic Church today believes and practises the same thing as the Church of the Apostles.

Other Arguments—In addition to these arguments, which rest largely on historical facts, there are several others which have a greater appeal for many people. Some of these may be stated as follows :—

Catholic Church is Holy

That religion is divine which of its very nature tends to produce fruits of holiness impossible to the unaided power of man. Such a religion is the Catholic Church. Her doctrine is clear and remarkably beautiful and inspiring; and her Sacraments and other aids to sanctification make the attainment of exalted sanctity comparatively easy for those of good will. This is the experience of millions of devout Catholics of all ages and climes. The outside world can see the reality of this power in the far higher moral level of those communities in which many seriously endeavour to make use of the supernatural aids of the Catholic Church. It can see this also in the galaxy of great saints produced in the Catholic Church, including St. Teresa of Avila, St. Anthony of Padua, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Francis of Sales, St. Bonaventure, St. Bernard of Citeaux, St. Augustine of Hippo, St. Ambrose, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. John of the Cross, St. Therese of Lisieux (of whose

life a short description is given in the last chapter of this booklet), and many others of like holiness. The holiness of the Catholic Church is seen all the more clearly when the so-called saints of other religions are placed alongside the saints who called the Catholic Church their Mother.

Has Divine Life

That religion is divine which has a life impossible for merely human organizations. The Catholic Church has such a life. She possesses unchanging unity of organization and doctrine in ever-changing adaptation and growth. Throughout two millenia of her history, in spite of enemies from within and from without, in diverse nations and cultures, ever expounding her deposit of doctrines to suit the needs of the times and ever reasoning on the meanings of these doctrines, amid the failure of whole systems of philosophy and the crash of empires, threatened by the ambitions and vices of men, the Catholic Church has remained unshaken, the same today at she was when Christ founded her. If but one doctrine could be disproved, if but one point of her closely-knit system of doctrines could be shown to contradict another single point, if the progress of science could show one doctrine of the teaching Church to be false, the Catholic Church would logically have to admit that she has no reason for existence. No other organization would dare to challenge the world in this wise. That the Catholic Church can do so successfully proves conclusively that she lives with a divine life.

Argument From Modern Miracles

When true miracles take place in connection with the worship of a certain religion we may justly conclude that that religion is divine. By a true miracle is meant a suspension of some law of nature, produced by the power of God. Cures that can be explained by suggestion or other natural causes cannot be adduced in favour of the truth of any religion. Natural causes may be suspected when certain wonders always require certain set conditions and manifest a uniformity in their operations. Such are the wonders of the Hindu ascetics described in the memoirs of the Mughal Emperors, for they are practically the same as those performed by their successors of the present day.

Miracles at Lourdes True Miracles

True miracles take place in connection with the worship of the Catholic Church. Omitting other classes of miracles, we shall here mention only the world-famous Shrine at Lourdes in southern France which gives all a unique opportunity of coming in contact with modern miracles. In 1856 a peasant girl, Bernadette Soubirous, was favoured with a number of apparitions of Mary, the Mother of Christ, and was told to do penance for sinners and to bid the priests build a Shrine on the spot. As a proof of the reality of the apparitions a number of striking miraculous cures took place, which have not ceased up to the present time. In 1882 a Medical Registration Bureau, a sort of "laboratory for miracles," was opened at Lourdes, where the most careful scientific methods are used to study the cures at the Shrine. Pilgrims seeking cures are invited

to undergo a careful examination before praying there; and if a cure is claimed, the case is studied over a long period to ascertain whether there is any relapse. Cures that can be attributed to suggestion or any other natural cause are promptly rejected, and the utmost rigour is exercised in examining the cases of reported miracles. The records of the Bureau are open to competent investigators of all beliefs and nationalities.

Utmost Rigour in Examination

The most wonderful miracles take place at this Shrine of Mary. Cancer and tubercular lesions are healed suddenly, and even bone is grown in an instant to fill a long-existing gap between two pieces of broken bone in a leg. In one case a woman recovered perfect vision when doctors found to their amazement that the optic nerve was perfectly incapable of the least sight. Other equally remarkable miracles are on record at the Bureau. The number of *registered* cures varies from one hundred to to well over two hundred a year. Such an impression on the savants of the world has been made by the miracles of Lourdes that Hilaire Belloc could write, "Lourdes was the thing that changed the mind of modern Europe with regard to miracles." It may be mentioned in passing that there can be no reason for doubting the miracles of Christ centuries ago when the like are taking place in our midst today.

Many Registered Cures

The testimony of these and other miracles to the claims of the Catholic Church to a divine origin is incon-

testable. This argument is confirmed by the fact that *no indubitable miracles* ever take place in connection with the worship of any other religious sect or group whatsoever.

Belief—How then does it come about that so many people fail to become members of Christ's Catholic Church? Many, perhaps the majority, do not know the real Catholic Church, and so are held from her through ignorance of what she really is. For others the difficulty comes from the will; they prefer darkness to light, they prefer not to know the truth, because their deeds are evil, and so they refuse to read or even think along lines which might upset the false peace of their mind. Often the deeds which keep us from considering the Catholic Church are not the grievously sinful ones commonly denominated evil. Preoccupation with wordly matters, the acquisition of wealth, the enjoyment of innocent pleasures, even social service and other patriotic occupations, things good, at least not objectionable in themselves, may easily be the occasion of our neglecting the supreme duty of life, the service of God and obedience to His holy will.

Worldly Entanglements May Blind Men

To evaluate the arguments of the Catholic Church properly, it is necessary, above all, to rectify our souls, *to be of good will.* Prayer and humble penance will help greatly to this end. It is very important that men prepare themselves for this gift of faith, since God seldom bestows

Necessity of a Good Life

it except on those who some way or other prepare themselves for it. Faith is practically never given to those who are obstinately proud or impure in thought or deed.

Thus, arguments alone do not suffice. God's grace it is that leads a man to inquire; God's grace it is that makes him understand; it brings him to the door of the Catholic Church; it ushers him in by making him pray, do penance and implore the greatest of all gifts, the faith and charity of a sincere heart.

The Great Step

So strong is this light of God's grace that, all of a sudden, as by an inspiration, it flashes at times upon a soul, bringing out the hidden meaning of a detail apparently insignificant. The soul sees that God wants the great surrender. She feels inclined to yield, but fears the consequences of that one decisive step. If she but knew, how happy are those that did take the step and took it resolutely, joyfully, putting their hand to the plough never again to look back! "He that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto everlasting life" (John XII, 25).

In the following chapters we have a brief resume of the principal teachings of the Catholic Church and of the obligations and practices of members of the Church.

GOD AND HIS CREATION

God—Catholic teaching about God adds little to what can be known from reason, except for the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation, which are matters of revelation. When the Catholic Church makes any pronouncement on the nature of God, it is usually to correct false notions arising from faulty reasoning, but not to teach anything new. For instance, when she insists that God can neither do anything intrinsically wrong nor make it licit for anyone else to do so (e.g., to lie or to blaspheme), she does not profess to do more than to set men right on points they should know from correct reasoning on their own part.

God Known from Reason also

The Trinity—In God there are three distinct Persons, equal in all things and coeternal. The First Person, the Father, is God; the Second Person, the Son, is God; the Third Person, the Holy Ghost, is God: yet there are not three Gods, but only one God, without parts or divisions. A perfect understanding of the Trinity is beyond our feeble comprehension, and necessarily so, because God is beyond our comprehension. We do know, however, that no manifest contradiction ever has or ever can be found in the doctrine of the Trinity, and that God has revealed it for us

The Trinity a Great Mystery

to believe. We take it on His word, that is, on divine faith.

Belief a Form of Worship

By assenting to this great truth on God's testimony, men offer God the homage of their highest faculties, those of intellect and will. It is, therefore, not something useless, something manifested to men merely to satisfy idle curiosity.

The Trinity not the Trimurti

It is well to note that the Christian concept of the Trinity is, contrary to popular opinion, quite different from the common concepts of the Hindu *Trimurti.* The Trinity does not mean three Gods, nor three aspects of one God, nor is It founded merely on God's work in creation. In theological language, the Persons are constituted by relations which are subsistent in the divine nature. The only thing the *Trimurti,* as commonly understood, has in common with the Trinity is the number three.

Angels Good and Bad

Angels—God created a number of pure spirits called angels, who were destined for an eternity of bliss in heaven. Some, however, tried to make themselves equal to God, and by this sin of pride deserved the eternal punishments of hell. Those who remained good pray for men and assist them ; the rest, generally known as devils, roam about the world, while still suffering the pains of hell, using their acute intellectual powers to induce men also to rebel against God. God permits this to draw greater

good from their evil attempts, because good men acquire greater merit by overcoming their temptations.

The World—The world is not a part of God, and, although as nothing compared to God, it is not a mere illusion. We cannot understand the full meaning of creation for the good reason that it is dependent on a display of the power of God, which is infinite in its least acts, whereas our minds are finite.

Creation means that God made and still makes to exist what was non-existent, and that He did and still does so without using any material or means, by merely willing what was non-existent to exist and to continue to exist. Everything in this world is thus essentially and most intimately dependent upon God at every moment of its existence and yet is not God nor a part of Him. All things created exist ultimately only for the Creator. Man was created to glorify God and to rejoice with Him for all eternity, and all else on the face of the earth is intended to help man in his journey to God.

The World is not God

Man Created for God

The creation of the world is correctly described in the first book of the Bible; but since many things contained therein are expressed in concepts peculiar to peoples of very ancient times, we are left to conjecture about the precise meaning of not a few passages.

Man—Whether it was ten thousand years or sixty thousand years ago, we have today no means of knowing when the first man appeared upon this planet, and whether the body of the first man was the result of a long series of evolution directed by God, or an immediate creation of the Almighty, is likewise uncertain ; for the Bible (which, after all, was never intended by God to be a textbook of science) is not clear on this point, and contrary to the generally received opinion, human science has no conclusive proof for or against the evolution of the human body from the bodies of some brute beasts. Evolution can never be against true religious teaching, for it is the same God, who is the author of true religion and true science. Evolution, if proved, would be one more argument for the greatness of God.

Evolution not Proved

Man is more than a mere body. He has an individual soul that can think and will. The separation of this soul from the body is called death. The soul of each individual is created by God at the very instant of conception, and is immortal. All mankind is descended from a single pair, Adam and Eve.

Each Man Has a Soul

Grace—The first parents of the human race were endowed with a special power or grace, often called supernatural life, which they would have transmitted to their descendants if they had not sinned. By this they were one day

Grace Given to Mankind

to see God as He is in Himself, without the medium of any creature. This made them, in a certain sense, divine, sharing in the very life of God, which consists in the contemplation of Himself.

Meaning of Grace

The meaning of grace can be seen from the following example. Owls have such very sensitive eyes that they can scarcely see in the day-time. The reason is that the light of day is too bright for their eyes. In like manner men cannot see God. He is present everywhere, but is, as it were, too bright for the weak eyes of men. If owls are to see clearly in the day-time, they must get eyes like those of men. If men wish to see the infinite God, they must get *divine* eyes, they must be divinized, i.e., must share the very life of God. The gift whereby men are divinized is called *sanctifying grace*.

Seeing God by Grace

This grace is given, so to say, in two installments. In its initial form in this life it gives the soul certain faculties, by which a man pleases God and performs works which merit an eternal reward. In its perfected form after death, it brings the soul face to face with the ravishing beauty of the Supreme, Unspeakable God (the Beatific Vision), to rejoice eternally with a bliss that is beyond the power of man to imagine or express.

Sin—There is a special joy that will result in the next life from the consciousness of having done what was

right in this life. God wanted to give this joy to Adam and Eve, and to all mankind, but to do so had also to give them the power of free will, so that they could choose what was right or what was wrong, since it is only by a free choice of good in preference to evil that this joy can be obtained. It is clear, however, that men must take the consequences of this deliberate choice, and that no injustice is done anyone by thus making him master of his own destiny.

First Parents Sinned

Unfortunately, despite a clear warning, Adam and Eve, being tempted by a damned angel, chose to disobey God and to do evil. The result of this first sin was that death and misery became the lot of mankind, and, worst of all, that wonderful gift of grace was lost, so that Adam and Eve could neither enjoy it nor pass it on to their descendants.

Sin Unspeakably Evil

Men cannot adequately comprehend what it means to sin against the infinite God, although they can reason that it must be an infinite offence, something unspeakably evil on account of the majesty of the One offended. Sin implicitly disputes the Creator's right to rule and even to exist, since it is a preferment of one's own will to God's. We are told that the greatest of angels tremble at the thought of sin, and yet puny men are to be found challenging the Almighty! Adam and Eve, then, received no more than they deserved for their sin.

The Redemption—God was in no wise bound to restore His gift of grace. It was not due human nature. God could have suppressed the supernatural end which the first human beings had forfeited. In that case, the descendants of Adam and Eve could have lived their lives without grace, and after death could have been rewarded with a natural happiness or punished, according as they deserved. Patient suffering of the miseries of life would have been an opportunity of acquiring some reward. For the wicked the miseries of life would have been but a part of their punishment. In that case no men would ever have been able to come to see God as He is in Himself, since they would have been without grace and without any means of acquiring it.

No Beatific Vision without Grace

God, however, freely chose to restore this grace to mankind,—but in His own way. The Second Person of the Trinity, the Son, was to become man and atone for the sin of mankind. Adam and Eve were told that Someone would come to restore the original gift to men, and that they themselves would get it if their intellects assented to God's testimony in this regard. Thus, for pride, humble obedience had to atone.

The Son Restores Grace

The Chosen People—To preserve the true notion of God and morality in the midst of nations fallen into the grossest idolatry, God chose a certain people, called the Hebrews or Jews, and promised that the Saviour would be born among them. From this people the world

The Jews and the Old Testament

received the Old Testament of the Bible, the work of many writers inspired by God, a collection of books in more than one way unique in the history of mankind.

The Saviour—In giving a Saviour God did not give as man gives, but in an infinite way, since He sent His own Son to become man and so make adequate reparation for man's sin and offer men once more the wonderful gift of grace.

The Incarnation Manifests Love

What charity is shown in this stupendous act! God descends to man! Indeed, He does more than merely become man. Although with one expression of sorrow, without even one drop of atoning blood, the Incarnation of the Son of God could have satisfied the divine jutice, yet He willed to do more, to suffer as no man ever suffered or even can suffer. The riotous imaginations of the whole world of antiquity never thought of producing such a figure of love in all their gods of mythology. God willed it thus, because He wanted men to realize the enormity of sin and the infinite holiness of God, and because He willed that His divine Son should win men by this great act of *love*.

Christ, Truly Man

Not an *avatar*, bearing a form assumed in *māyā* to win love, but a real man, born as a tender infant, feeling the cold of a winter's stable, thirsty and hungry often, despised and persecuted, but ever loving and ever tense with

a desire to immolate Himself for His brethren, the true *Kalki*—such was the Incarnate Son of God, Jesus ("Saviour"), the Christ (the "Anointed One"), the King of Heaven and earth, "the Way, the Truth and the Life".

Nearly two thousand years ago, in Palestine, in the place and at the time predicted, the Saviour was born, lived and made the supreme sacrifice of His life to atone for men's sins and to restore the lost gift of divine life through grace.

No better description of the life and teachings of the divine Saviour can be found than the simple words of the Gospels, books written by His contemporaries. A narration of some of the principal events of His life, in the very words of these Gospels (Westminster Version), is given in the following chapter.

THE CHRIST, THE SAVIOUR

The Doctrine of the Incarnation—

(JOHN I, 1-18)

The Saviour was God

In the beginning was the Word,*
And the Word was with God,
And the Word was God......
All things were made through Him......
In Him was life,
And the life was the light of men ;
And the light shineth in the darkness,
And the darkness hath not overcome it......
And the Word was made flesh
And dwelt amongst us......
God no man hath seen at any time ;
God only-begotten,
Who is in the bosom of the Father,
Hath declared Him.

His Teaching about Re-birth or Grace—

(JOHN III, 1-21)

Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews ; this man came to Him by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God ; for no one can do these signs which thou dost unless God be with him."

* I. e., God the Son.

Spiritual Regeneration Necessary

Jesus answered and said to him, "Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is already old? Can he enter into his mother's womb, and be born a second time?"

Jesus answered, "Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born of water and spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God* That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not wonder that I have said to thee, 'ye must be born from above.' The wind bloweth whither it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh or whither it goeth; so it is with every one that is born of the Spirit."

Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things come to pass?"

Jesus answered and said to him, "Art thou the teacher of Israel, and understandest not these things? Amen, amen, I say to thee, we speak what we know, and bear witness of what we have seen, and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you things heavenly?

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* To get the supernatural life of grace, which Jesus came to restore to mankind, it is necessary "to be born again." Jesus here hints at how this must be done.

No one hath gone up into heaven but He who hath come down from heaven, the Son of Man. As Moses raised up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of God be raised up, that whosoever believeth in Him may have everlasting life."

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life......He that believeth in Him is not judged; he that believeth not is already judged, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. Now herein is the judgments that whereas the light is come into the world, men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil. Every one that doth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, lest his works be convicted."

Belief in Christ Necessary

The Sermon on the Mount—

(MATTHEW V-VII)

(Not everything taught by Christ here is of obligation. Many things are merely counsels of perfection. These are ideals proposed by Christ, but not given as commands to all. Hence one does not necessarily sin if he does not obey certain of the following exhortations).

And seeing the multitudes, He went up into the mountain; and when He was seated His disciples came unto

Him. And opening His mouth He taught them, saying:

The Beatitudes

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens.

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the land.

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justness, for they shall have their fill.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall find mercy.

Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they that have suffered persecution for justness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens.

Blessed are ye when they shall reproach you, and persecute you, and speak all evil against you, lying, because of Me; rejoice and exult, because your reward is great in heaven. For thus did they persecute the prophets who were before you".

"You have heard that it was said, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery'. But I tell you, that every one that looketh upon a woman so as to lust after her hath already

committed adultery with her in his heart. Yea, if thy right eye scandalize thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is better for thee that one of thy members perish, and thy whole body be not cast into hell.........

"And it was said, 'Whosoever putteth away his wife, let him give her a writ of divorce'. But I tell you, that every man that putteth away his wife, save on account of impurity, maketh her to suffer adultery; and whosoever marrieth her that is put away committeth adultery...........

No Divorce

"Ye have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye', and 'tooth for tooth'. But I tell you not to resist the evil-doer. Nay, whosoever smiteth thee upon thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And to him that would go to law with thee and take thy tunic, give up thy coat also. And whosoever compelleth thee to go one mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee; and from him that would borrow of thee turn not away...

"And when ye pray, ye shall not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand at prayer in the synagogues and at the street corners, in order that they may be seen by men......And in your prayers babble not, as do the gentiles; for they think to be heard by reason of their wordiness......Pray ye, therefore, thus:

True Prayer

Our Father in the heavens,
Hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth!
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our debts, as ourselves have forgiven our debtors,
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.........

"Seek ye first His kingdom and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you. Therefore be not anxious for the morrow; the morrow will have anxieties of its own. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof........

"Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. What man of you is there, whose son shall ask of him a loaf, and he will hand him a stone? Or shall ask for a fish, and he will hand him a serpent? If ye then, evil as ye are, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in the heavens give good things to them that ask him!

"Whatsoever therefore you would that men should do unto you, the same do you also unto them; for this is the law and the prophets.

"Enter ye by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad the way that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter thereby. But narrow is the gate and close the way that leadeth to life, and few are they that find it.

Few on Right Road

"Beware ye of false prophets, such as come to you in sheep's clothing, but within are ravening wolves. By their fruits ye shall know them."

Jesus Calms the Storm—

(MARK IV, 35-41)

And on that day, when evening had fallen, He saith to them, "Let us pass over to the other side." And leaving the crowd they take Him just as He was in the boat. And other boats were with Him. And there cometh a great squall of wind, and the waves were dashing over into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. And He Himself was in the stern, asleep upon the cushion. And they waken Him, and say to Him, "Master, is it naught to Thee that we are perishing?"

Nature Obeys Him

And He arose, and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! be still!"

And the wind fell, and there came a great calm. And He said to them, "Why are ye afraid? Have ye not yet faith?"

And they feared with a great fear, and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?"

The Stupendous Sacrament—

(JOHN VI, 48-69)

Promise of the Eucharist

"I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the desert, and they died; this is the bread come down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. I am the living bread come down from heaven. If anyone eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world."

The Jews, therefore, strove one with another, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

Jesus, therefore, said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye shall not have life in you. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath everlasting life; and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and as I live because of the Father, so he that eateth Me, he also shall live because of Me. This is the bread come down from heaven: not as your fathers ate and died: he that eateth this bread shall live for ever."

These things He said in the synagogue, teaching at Capharnaum.

Many therefore of His disciples, having heard, said, "This is a hard saying ; who can listen to it ?"......After this many of His disciples withdrew and walked no more with Him. Jesus said therefore to the twelve, " Do ye also wish to depart ? " *

Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go ? Thou hast the words of everlasting life ; and we have come to believe and to know that Thou art the Holy One of God".

Lazarus is Raised from the Dead—

JOHN XI, (6-45)

When therefore He had heard that Lazarus was sick, He still remained two days in the place where He was ; then after that He saith to His disciples, "Let us return into Judea."......

After this He saith to them, "Lazarus our friend sleepeth ; but I go that I may awake him."......

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* Note that no secondary figurative meaning is attached to His words by Christ; for He did not call back those who evidently took the words literally, but on the contrary was willing to let others also depart rather than explain what He had said in a way that would be acceptable to all. Clearly He meant just what He said. His Body was to be our Food in a very true sense. This is and has always been the teaching of the Catholic Church which Christ founded. Cf. Matthew XXVI, 26 ; Mark XIV, 22 ; Luke XXII, 19 ; I Cor. II, 23.

Now Jesus had spoken of his death; but they thought that He was speaking of the repose of sleep. Then therefore Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead; and for your sakes I rejoice that I was not there that ye may believe. But let us go to him."......

When therefore Jesus came, He found that Lazarus had already been four days in the tomb.........Martha therefore said to Jesus, "Lord, hadst Thou been here, my brother had not died; and even now I know that whatsoever Thou shalt ask of God, God will give Thee."...

Christ is the Life of Men

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, even if he die, shall live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me, he shall never die. Believest Thou this?"

She saith to Him, "Yea, Lord, I have believed that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, That cometh into the world."......

When Mary therefore came where was Jesus and saw Him, she fell at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, hadst Thou been here, my brother had not died."

Jesus therefore, when He saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her weeping, groaned in spirit and troubled Himself, and said, "Where have ye laid him?"

They say to Him, "Lord, come and see."

Jesus wept.

The Jews therefore said, "Behold how He loved him!"......

Jesus therefore, again groaning within Himself, cometh to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone lay against it. Jesus saith, "Take away the stone."

Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith to Him, "Lord, already he stinketh ; for he hath been dead four days".

Jesus saith to her, "Did I not say to thee that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?"

They therefore took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I give Thee thanks that Thou hast heard Me. And I knew that Thou dost always hear Me, but because of the multitude which standeth around have I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth."

And he that had been dead came forth, bound feet and hands with bandages, and his face was wrapped about with a cloth.

Jesus saith to them, "Loose him, and let him go."

The Danger of Possessions—

(MATTHEW XIX, 16-24)

And behold a certain man came to Him and said, "Master, what good work am I to do in order to have life everlasting ?"

Jesus said, " 'Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, honour thy father and thy mother' and 'thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' "

The young man saith to Him, "All these have I kept ; wherein am I still lacking ?"

Jesus said to him, "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast and give to the poor and thou shalt have treasure in the heavens and come, follow Me."

But when the young man heard the saying, he departed in grief, for he had great possessions.

Riches a Great Hindrance

And Jesus said to His disciples, "Amen I say to you, with difficulty shall a rich man enter the kingdom of heaven ! And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven."

The Last Supper—

(JOHN XIII sqq.)

Knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God and was going to God, He riseth from the supper and layeth aside His garments, and taking a towel He girded Himself. Then He poureth water into the basin, and began to wash the feet of the disciples, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded......

When therefore He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and had lain down again, He said to them, "Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call Me master and Lord; and ye say well, for so I am. If therefore I, the Lord and the Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so ye do also......

The Example of Christ

"I am the Way and the Truth and the Life; no one goeth to the Father save through Me......

"How canst thou say, 'Shew us the Father'? Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in Me? The words that I say to you, I speak not of Myself; but the Father abiding in Me doth His works. Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; otherwise, because of the works themselves believe......

"But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things......

"As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can ye, unless ye abide in me......"

"These things I command you that ye love one another. If the world hateth you, know ye that it hath hated Me before you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world for this cause the world hateth you......"

Christians will be Hated

These things spake Jesus, and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour is come: glorify Thy Son......Now this is everlasting life, that they know Thee, the only true God, and Him whom Thou hast sent, Jesus Christ......Now do Thou glorify Me, Father, with Thyself, with the glory which I had before the world was, with Thee......

"I have manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou hast given Me out of the world......Not for them only do I pray, but also for those who believe in Me through their word, that they all may be one, even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee—that they too may be in us, in order that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me...... "

Unity of True Christians

The Death of the Saviour—

(Matthew xxvi, 50, sqq.)

Then they came forward and laid hands on Jesus and seized Him. And behold, one of those with Jesus stretched forth his hand and drew his sword, and smiting the servant of the high priest, cut off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, "Put back thy sword into its place; for all that take the sword shall perish by the sword. Or thinkest thou I cannot beseech My Father, and He forthwith will furnish Me more than twelve legions of angels? How then are the scriptures to be fulfilled, that so it must befall?"*

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*Cf. the prophecies about the Redeemer, particularly Isaias, chapter 53, etc.

Now they who had seized Jesus led Him away unto Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered together.........

The Christ, The Son of God

And the high priest said to Him, "I adjure thee by the living God to tell us whether thou art the Christ, the Son of God."

Jesus saith to him, "Thou hast said it. Nevertheless I say to you, hereafter 'ye shall see the Son of Man seated on the right hand of the Power and coming upon the clouds of heaven.'"

Then the high priest rent his garments, saying, "He hath blasphemed! What further need have we of witnesses? Lo, now ye have heard the blasphemy; what think ye?"

And they answered and said, "He is worthy of death."

Then did they spit in His face and buffet Him, while others cuffed Him, saying, "Prophesy to us, O Christ, who was it that struck Thee?".........

And they bound Him and led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate, the governor........

And the governor asked Him, saying, "Art thou the king of the Jews?"

And Jesus said, "Thou sayest it."

Pilate saith to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?"

They all say, "Let Him be crucified!"........

After scourging Jesus (Pilate) delivered Him up to be crucified........

And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, "the place of the skull", they gave Him wine to drink, mixed with gall; and after tasting He would not drink it. And when they had crucified Him 'they divided His garments, casting lots for them'.* And they sat and guarded Him there. And above His head they placed in writing the charge against Him:

THIS IS JESUS
THE KING OF THE JEWS

Now from the sixth hour darkness fell over the whole earth until the ninth hour.† But about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani", that is, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"..........

Christ Dies

But Jesus again cried out with a loud voice and gave up the ghost.

And behold, the curtain of the sanctuary was rent in twain from top to bottom, and the earth quaked, and the rocks were rent, and the tombs were opened; and many

*According to the prophecy, Psalms XXII (XXI), 18.

†The sacred writer probably intended to say no more than that the whole earth visible from that place was darkened at the time of Jesus' death, although there is reason from other sources to believe that the darkness was literally universal.—The depths of love manifested by Jesus for men is nowhere better seen than in His voluntary suffering of that most terrible of trials, the feeling of abandonment, to win their love and to save them from eternal loss.

bodies of the saints that had gone to their rest arose, and coming forth from their tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many. And when the centurion and those with him on guard over Jesus saw the earthquake and all that befell, they were very much afraid, and they said, "Truly He was the Son of God."

The Resurrection—

(MATTHEW XXVIII, 1-20)

And after the sabbath, towards the dawn of the first day of week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the sepulchre. And behold there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, and drawing near rolled away the stone and sat thereon. His appearance was as lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of him the guards quaked, and became as dead men.

The Resurrection

But the angel answered and said to the women, "Fear not ye, for I know that ye seek Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here, for He is risen, even as He said; come, behold the place where He lay. And go ye quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; there ye shall see Him. Behold I have told you."

And departing quickly from the tomb in fear and great joy, they ran to tell His disciples........

And the eleven disciples went into Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had appointed.........

Baptize and Teach all

And Jesus drew near and spoke to them, saying, "All power in heaven and on earth hath been given to Me. Go ye, therefore, make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you: and behold, I am with you all days, unto the consummation of the world."

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST

The Form of the Church—One misses the essence of Christ's teaching if one does not understand that Christ wanted salvation to be a social and not an individual matter. Men were to go to God not as so many separated sheep, but in a body. This one body, animated by Christ Himself, was to be governed by men appointed for the purpose. "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you (John XX, 21)," He told His Apostles. "He that heareth you, heareth Me; and He that despiseth you, despiseth Me (Luke X, 16)." Over this body of believers one was appointed to be Supreme Pastor and endowed with the gift of infallibility in his official teachings regarding faith and morals. When Christ's first successor as Head of the Church, the Apostle St. Peter, was martyred at Rome, his authority, which was to last "unto to the consummation of the world" (Matt. XXVIII, 20), was transmitted to others in a long line known to the world as the Popes.

The Church an Organization

Two hundred and sixty six successors to St. Peter, the Popes, have guided the destinies of the Catholic Church throughout the centuries until the present day, which sees the reigning Pope, Pius XI, leading to heaven the only united body of believers in the world. Christ never promised that the Popes should be impeccable· that is, unable to sin. Some half dozen were sinners, but taken

266 Popes Headed Christ's Church

as a whole the Popes of the Catholic Church form the most saintly and honourable body of men in all history. Their claim to authority, however, does not rest on their personal qualities, but on the fact that in their official acts as Head of Christ's Church they speak in the name of Christ, who is God. As a matter of fact, in all the centuries of controversy and ignorance not one Pope has ever compromised a single teaching of the Church. As we have seen already in the first chapter, such uniformity and agreement is humanly impossible, and can be explained only by believing that Christ's promise of divine assistance is realized in the Catholic Church.

Priests and Bishops

By the institution of Christ the faithful are directed and ministered to by priests ordained for their sacred functions. The priests are under the immediate jurisdiction of bishops, who, in turn, are under the Bishop of Rome, the Pope. Spiritual powers that enable a man to confer certain sacraments, left to the Church by Christ, are transmitted from one generation to another through the bishops, to whom alone is committed the power of making other men bishops and priests. The authority, or jurisdiction, however, given by Christ to His Church, is transmitted differently, namely, by injunction. This means that authority in the Church must be transmitted from the supreme head of the Church, the Pope, or through someone who has it from the Pope.

The Creeds of the Church—From the earliest times, in keeping with her character as a teacher, the Church has

formulated various Creeds to express her doctrines better for different circumstances of time and place. These Creeds all teach the same doctrine, although some are more explicit on certain points than others. One of the oldest, the so-called Apostles' Creed, which comes down to us from the first centuries of the Christian era, is given here:

The Apostles' Creed

"I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell;* the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven; sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Catholic Church; the communion of Saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and life everlasting. Amen."

The Sacraments Give Life

The Sacraments.—In Christ's mystical Body, the Church, there are seven *sacraments* whereby men are made part of this Body, given that supernatural life of grace by which they may share the life of Christ Himself, and made to grow and increase in that life.

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* Hell here does not mean the hell of those damned for all eternity, but a place in which the souls of the just who died before the coming of Christ were waiting until He should once more make it possible for them to enter heaven.

Baptism.—As we have seen in Christ's discourse to Nicodemus, men must be born into supernatural life. This is done by the Sacrament of Baptism, which makes one a member of the mystical Body of Christ, the Catholic Church. Baptism, no matter by whom conferred, is always valid, provided the prescribed ceremony is faithfully performed and the person baptized, if he be an adult, have the desire to be baptized and the one conferring the Sacrament has the intention of doing what Christ intended. Thus, a Mohammedan could administer valid Christian baptism to a dying Hindu child. Baptism can be received but once. Those who have reached the age of reason (about seven years) before receiving Baptism should be sincerely sorry for their past sins and make an act of faith in the principal truths of the Apostles' Creed. When the actual Baptism of water is physically impossible, an ardent desire for Baptism with perfect contrition for sins committed takes its place until actual Baptism can be received. This substitute for actual Baptism is called the Baptism of Desire. Only actual Baptism, however, confers the right to receive the other Sacraments.

Requisites for Baptism

Confirmation—Confirmation is a sacrament which enables the Christian to live a more perfect life. Like Baptism, it can be received but once.

Penance—By this sacrament sins committed after Baptism can be forgiven and the grace lost by grievous sin restored. To receive this sacrament one must (1) seek to recall *all the grievous sins* he has committed since his Baptism or last valid reception of the Sacrament

of Penance ; (2) be heartily sorry for all past grievous sins, either because one detests his sins on God's account (*i.e.*, with *perfect contrition*, which is unselfish and forgives sins even before the reception of the sacrament, although the obligation of receiving the sacrament remains), or because one is unwilling to lose heaven and go to hell (*imperfect contrition*) ; (3) be firmly resolved never to commit again those sins or any other grievous sins ; (4) confess to an authorized priest all the grievous sins one has committed since Baptism or the last valid reception of Penance, (confessing also, if one wishes, all lesser sins for which one is sorry and resolved never to commit again) ; (5) receive the absolution the priest imparts in the name of Christ and with His power, and accept the penalty imposed by the priest.

Confession of Sins

Grievous Sins

Three things are required to make a grievous (mortal) sin :—(1) The sinful thought, word, deed, or omission, must be something of importance. (2) One must know at the time one commits the sin that one is turning away from God. (3) There must be full consent to the sin. If one of these three conditions is wanting, there can be no grievous sin, but at most "venial" sin. Grievous sin makes the soul an enemy of God and deserving of eternal punishment : venial sin must also be punished, but not eternally.

Indulgences—If the love at the back of one's sorrow were quite perfect, all punishment for sin would be

cancelled by it. Usually this is not the case, and hence after forgiveness of the guilt of sin there is generally some punishment to be received for a while in this life or after death.

The Church Grants Indulgences

The power and authority of the Church, however, is such that the remission of a great deal and sometimes all of the punishment due is possible upon the performance of certain good works specified by the Church. The degrees of remission are generally expressed as so many "days" or "years" of "indulgence." This does not mean that one obtains freedom from so many days or years of punishment after death, for there is no such thing as time for a departed soul. Still less does an indulgence mean, as Protestants sometimes assert, a permission to commit sin for so many days or years, but that the recipient gets that amount of remission of punishment that could have been obtained by performing so many days or years of the penance imposed by the Church on sinners in the early ages of Christianity.

The Eucharist—1) The Mass—This is the same Sacrifice as that offered by Christ when He was crucified, for the Victim and the Priest are the same, namely, Christ.

The Great Sacrifice

This is the only Sacrifice worthy of God, hence Catholics offer all their prayers and other good works through this one. The Mass continuously applies the redemption to mankind. It was instituted by Christ Himself at the Last Supper when He commanded His Apostles to do what He did then, "for a commemoration" of

His suffering and death. A man who has this power to offer the Sacrifice of the Mass in Christ's name is called a priest.

The Eucharist—2) Holy Communion—During the Mass the priest takes bread and wine, as Christ enjoined, and consecrates them into Christ's own Body and Blood, so that Christ is truly present, body and soul, humanity and divinity, under the *appearances* of bread and wine. The Body and Blood of Christ is then administered to Catholics who are free from the guilt of grievous sin, so that through this stupendous supernatural Food they may receive an increase and strengthening of supernatural life. By Church law it is necessary that the communicants should have been fasting strictly from midnight when they receive this most august Sacrament, unless It is received as *Viaticum* in a dangerous illness. Ordinarily Holy Communion may be received not oftener than once a day.

The Sacred Body of Christ

Extreme Unction—This Sacrament consists in an anointing (together with prayer) with holy oil of one in danger of death. It is administered by a priest, and takes away the remains of sin, gives peace and spiritual strength, and restores one to health if that be for his spiritual welfare. This Sacrament can be given but once in the same illness.

Holy Order—This Sacrament is conferred only by a bishop and only on men. By it priests are ordained and bishops consecrated. It cannot be repeated, for it makes the recipient "a priest forever."

Marriage—Christ raised the matrimonial contract to the dignity of a sacrament, so that married couples might thus receive the helps they need for their heavy responsibilities. To be valid, the marriage of Catholics must take place before a duly authorized Catholic priest and two witnesses, unless an exemption is had for a good reason. Catholics can never re-marry during the lifetime of their lawful partners. For further information regarding doubtfully valid marriages and other such matters one should consult a Catholic priest.

One Man, One Woman, for Life

Prayer—To do any good work towards salvation man needs God's help or *actual grace*, which is obtained chiefly by the sacraments and prayer. Prayer is the lifting up of the mind and heart to God, by thinking of Him, by adoring, praising, thanking Him, and by begging from Him all blessings for soul and body. It is the noblest act of which man is capable.

Definition of Prayer

Prayer should be said with attention, devotion, humility, confidence and perseverance, and, when well made, i. e., as God wishes it, is infallibly answered, according to the promise of Christ. On the other hand, it is a common doctrine of the Church that without prayer salvation or perseverance in a good life is impossible. It is well to note that mysticism generally supposes certain higher forms of

Conditions and Fruits of Prayer

prayer, and is seldom given to any other than those who have been faithful in the lower forms of prayer.

One may pray directly to God or sometimes seek the intercession of others, especially of those who are now with God in heaven. That prayers made through angels and saints are pleasing to God we know from the teachings of the Church, and from the fact that many miracles have been worked in answer to such prayers. Mary, the ever-virgin Mother of Jesus, is, naturally, specially powerful with God and has, moreover, given innumerable striking proofs of her love for those who invoke her intercession, in the many favours she has showered upon her clients.

Praying Through Saints

Some forms of prayer will be found at the end of this booklet.

Fasting—The Church has always commended fasting and other salutary penances as means of chastizing oneself for sins committed and to make one's prayers more earnest and hence more efficacious.

Fasting is Good

Almsgiving—The rich and educated are strictly bound to assist their less fortunate fellow-men who may be in dire necessity. In addition, alms-deeds, even those not of necessity, are encouraged by the Church as particularly beneficial forms of prayer, self-chastisement and charity.

Almsgiving is Necessary

Devotions—The Church has approved of many special ceremonies and forms of worship in addition to the Sacraments. These are not of obligation, but nevertheless are very helpful to different persons. The *Rosary* consists in the recitation of the Lord's Prayer and the Angelic Salutation (given at the end of this pamphlet among the prayers) a certain number of times counted on beads while meditating on fifteen principal events in the life of Christ and of His Blessed Mother. *Benediction* is the blessing of the faithful with the Body of Christ present in the Eucharist. The *Stations of the Cross* are fourteen places, generally in a church, which the faithful are invited to visit while meditating on the sufferings of Christ. *Relics* are objects connected with the saints while they dwelt in this world. These objects are honoured in the same way that pictures and statues of notable persons are honoured everywhere, as a means of showing one's esteem for the persons they recall to mind. *Medals* and *Scapulars* are kept on one's person as a form of continuous prayer and to keep one thinking of God and the saints. The *Angelus* is a form of prayer said three times daily to remind men of the great central truth of the Christian religion, the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity.

Devotions that are Helpful

Pictures and Statues

Among the principal *sacramentals* are *Holy Water*, water specially blessed with the prayers of the Church, *Medals*, *Scapulars* and *Palms*.

The Church encourages many ceremonies and devotions, because it understands that the human heart generally needs them to converse better with God, and because men owe God the homage of their whole being, not merely that of their intellect and will. The Catholic Church offers ceremonies and devotions that are usually very beautiful and consoling and make the faithful delight "to dwell in the house of God."

Church Ceremonies Beautiful

OBLIGATIONS OF THE FAITHFUL

The doctrines of the Church tell us what to believe; the Sacraments make us members of the Church and give us strength to do what is required; and the commandments point out how we are to act. The commandments may be summed up in these words of Christ: "Love God with thy whole heart and thy neighbour as thyself." The ten commandments given by Moses on Mount Sinai are based upon the natural law promulgated in the hearts of all men; the commandments of the Church apply only to those who have been baptized.

Difference in Commandments

Commandments of God—

I—The first commandment bids us to worship the true God and no other, and not to adore idols or to take any part in worship not objectively acceptable to God. For this reason a Catholic may not join in the public worship conducted by any other religious bodies whatsoever. This commandment also forbids all superstitions.

Superstition Forbidden

II—The second commandment requires us to honour God's name, and especially not to take false oaths.

III—Men must abstain at least part of their time from servile works and occupy themselves in the worship of God. When giving the ten commandments to the Jews, God set aside the seventh day, our Saturday, for

this purpose. With God's authority, the Catholic Church transferred the obligation to Sunday to honour Christ's resurrection from the dead on Easter Sunday.

Sunday Worship

IV—This commandment enjoins primarily honour and obedience to one's parents, but also obedience to all legitimate authority, whether of the Church, of the State, or of husbands over their wives. By it also parents must provide properly for the welfare of their children.

V—The fifth commandment forbids not only the taking of a man's life unjustly, but also everything that may lead to it, such as anger, hatred, the spirit of revenge, quarrelling, and fighting. No sin is committed in killing animals for food or other useful purposes, for all such creatures are meant to be of help to man. The Church has ever encouraged a spirit of kindness and gentleness towards brute animals, but, on the other hand, has ever been opposed to those who would make human and animal life of equal value, especially to those who cover their inhumanity to man by excessive fondness for irrational animals.

Killing Animals

The fifth commandment also forbids all unjust wars, suicide and abortion. Drunkenness is opposed to this commandment. Even moderate consumption of alcoholic drinks may be a sin for some individuals, if it is certain that the otherwise allowable moderate enjoyment of these drinks will eventually lead them to drunkenness.

The Drink Evil

VI—All sexual impurity is strictly forbidden. Immodest plays, songs, pictures and expressions are to be shunned insomuch as they often constitute proximate occasions of sins against this commandment. Wilful impure thoughts or desires are grievously sinful, as is all unnatural use of the sexual powers even within the bond of matrimony. Hence the use of medicines or appliances to frustrate the sexual act when it is placed, so that conception cannot take place, is a crime against nature and will be severely punished. Self-control as a form of birth-control is not only allowed, but in certain circumstances even encouraged.

Impurity and Birth-Control

VII—This commandment forbids unjust acquisition of another's property, such as stealing, cheating, borrowing excessively, negligence in one's work, defrauding labourers of their wages, and so on. *Sins against this commandment are not forgiven until the sinner has resolved to pay back what he owes.* It is grievously sinful to aid any organizations, such as that of the Communists, which deny man's natural rights to property.

Stealing and Communism

VIII—This commandment forbids lies of every sort, rash judgment of others, tale-bearing, harmful gossip, and all forms of detraction. Peculiarly heinous sins against this commandment are perjury in law courts and misrepresentation of the true religion ordained by God.

Lying and Perjury

IX—To covet another's husband or wife is specially sinful and is forbidden by this commandment.

X—The tenth commandment forbids avarice, covetousness, and all jealousy and envy of others on account of their prosperity.

Commandments of the Church—*

(As applied in India)

Mass on Holydays

1—Catholics must assist at Mass and abstain from servile works on Sundays and the following holy-days: Christmas, Ascension Thursday, Corpus Christi, and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. One is excused from the precept only when one is hindered by a sufficiently grave impediment, such as illness, etc.

Fast and Abstinence

II—Catholics must fast on the six Fridays of Lent (the forty days preceeding the Feast of Easter) and on the vigil of Christmas. When fasting, one may take but one full meal and that after mid-day. A *collation*, a meal of eight ounces, is allowed in the evening, or, if the principal meal is taken in the evening, the collation may be taken at noon. In the morning two ounces of bread or rice may be taken. On a fast day there is no objection to drinking at any time, provided that what is drunk is taken as part of the meal or is something not

* While the Ten Commandments of God were given by God to Moses, the Commandments or Precepts of the Church were given by the Catholic Church, relying on the authority given her by Christ.

considered to be food. Thus coffee and tea may be taken at any time, but not chocolate.

Catholics must abstain from flesh-meat on all Fridays of the year, on the Wednesdays of Lent, and on the eves of the Feasts of the Assumption and Christmas, i.e., on August 14 and December 24 (unless the days fall on Sundays). By custom eggs and fish are allowed on all abstinence days.

Those who have attained the age of reason, i.e., seven years, must abstain ; those who have reached their twenty-first year and have not begun their sixtieth year are bound to fast. Certain classes of the poor, the sick, etc., are exempted from this law.

III—Catholics, if they are in the state of grievous sin, are obliged to receive the Sacrament of Penance at least once a year.

IV—They must also receive Holy Communion during what is called the Easter time* and the time of death.

V—The faithful must support their parish priests.

Marriage Law

VI—Catholics are bound to observe certain Church laws regarding marriage. For instance, Catholics may not marry before a certain age (for the woman, fourteen ; for the man, sixteen), nor with blood relations up to the third degree, nor with non-Catholics, unless a dispensation is previously granted by the Church for a good reason.

* In India the Easter time generally lasts from Ash Wednesday to Trinity Sunday, a period of about fourteen weeks.

The Church laws are very wise and conduce greatly to the future happiness of the married couples. Violations of these laws in certain cases render the marriage of Catholics invalid.

These six commandments of the Church all bind under pain of grievous sin.

False Notions—In this connection it may be said that there are many mistaken notions among non-Catholics about the obligations of Catholics. Some erroneously believe that Catholics are *obliged* to eat meat. A convert who has a repugnance for eating meat is entirely free not to eat it. Indeed, if one abstains out of a love for mortification, the Church will praise this action.

Food, Caste, Politics

The Church does not forbid the observance of harmless caste rules. Convert Brahmins may marry with Brahmins, as many actually do in Southern India even after becoming Catholics, and are under no obligation to marry with lower castes. The Catholic Church allows great freedom in all such matters. She does insist, however, that all should in very deed love members of other classes and castes, and that all should be equal in the Church.

Catholics are under no political obligations to the Pope. The Pope is a free sovereign with a tiny territory of his own, precisely because he wishes to be, as Head of the Church, free from all political control or ambitions. History shows that Catholics have always been most patriotic citizens.

THE CHURCH AND NON-CATHOLICS

Life and Propagation—We have seen how the Catholic Church was founded, organized and propagated, and what are her principal means of sanctifying men, and what obligations she lays on her members to enable them to reach their supernatural end more easily and securely. Let us now turn our attention to the Church as she exists today in her relations with non-Catholics.

The World's Greatest Religion

The Catholic Church holds the spiritual allegiance of nineteen percent of the total population of the world (352,000,000 members) more than any other religious body. She has more than double the number of adherents of all the Protestant denominations, Baptists, Presbyterians, Church of England, Lutherans, Adventists, Congregationalists and others put together. This is the largest, and most widespread of all religions, having numerous followers in every quarter of the globe, in practically every country, race, caste, and linguistic division, all professing the same faith, partaking of the same sacraments, and obeying the same spiritual authority.

True to Christ's command, the Catholic Church seeks to tell every person in the whole world about Christ's teachings and commandments, so that those "who are of the truth" may believe and so reach the goal for which they were placed in this world. Her converts annually

number lakhs, and included such distinguished living persons as Giovanni Papini, Peter Wust, G. K. Chesterton, Domenico Giuliotti, Parmananda, Animananda, George Joseph, Sheila Kaye-Smith, Ronald Knox, Frederick Van Eeden, Willibrord Verkade, and many others of all races and nations. In her missionary work for those lands, in which she is less well known, she is assisted by an army of generous souls who vow to spend their lives, without recompense in this life, in spiritual and charitable works. Thousands of other Catholic men and women spend their lives in prayer and penance in secluded monasteries, begging God's mercy on a sinful world. Among the better known Religious Orders or Congregations of the Catholic Church seeking to advance the Church by active work and by prayer are the Benedictines, Carmelites, Cistercians, Franciscans, Jesuits, Redemptorists, and Salesians.

Missionary Work

While most anxious that all men should become Catholics by conviction, the Catholic Church is resolutely opposed to forced conversions, and forbids her members to use any force to make others accept the Catholic Faith, as is clear from Canon 1351 of the Code of Canon (Church) Law.

Forced Conversions Prohibited

Non-Catholics—What do Catholics say of those who are not Catholics? Do they condemn them all to hell? In answer to this question it may be best to give the

following examples of how Catholics view different classes of men.

Disobedience a Grievous Sin

A is a non-Catholic convinced that the Catholic Church is the religion God has ordained for all men. However, for reasons of family and reputation, he refuses to accept Baptism. He is committing a most grievous sin; for his first duty is to God.

B is a non-Catholic doubting about his present position and suspecting that the Catholic Church may be the one he is obliged to join. He refuses, however, even to consider the claims of the Catholic Church, because he fears that he may be convinced by her arguments. He also commits a grievous sin by neglecting to seek after his duty, in this case God's will in his regard.

C is convinced that the Catholic Church is divine and accepts Baptism, but fails to observe the commandments. He also fails to attain salvation.

Good Men are Saved

D is an adult non-Catholic who has never heard anything good about the Catholic Church, and so does not even suspect that it might be God's own religion. He leads a good life according to his conscience and never knowingly and willingly commits any grievous sin or, if he does so, sincerely repents for God's love. God will provide for him so that he may get supernatural grace,

at least through the Baptism of Desire, which implies perfect love for God for His own sake. D reaches God, but does not receive more than a fraction of the eternal bliss that would have been his if he had had the means and great helps of the Catholic Church.

Infants Without Baptism

E is an infant dying without Baptism. He cannot enjoy the beatific vision of God, which is granted only to those possessed of the divine gift of supernatural grace. On the other hand, he will not be punished for any sins of his own, for he has committed none. Hence he will not suffer any of the torments reserved for those who wilfully transgress the laws of God, but will enjoy the happiness God could have given to all good men if He had not raised them to the present order in which they are destined to the Divine vision.

F is an average man and a non-Catholic, who has heard many evil reports about the Catholic Church, and has quite rightly detested the Church he has in his mind. He will not be punished for this detestation, for he sees no wrong in his judgment. Unfortunately, unlike D, he sins grievously in other matters. For this he is sorry at the hour of death, but his motive is the fear of hell. He cannot rise to the heights of perfect love for God, as D did, and so dies without either Baptism of Water or Baptism of Desire and is punished for his sins.

Dying Without Baptism

G is an average man, like F, but a Catholic. He commits many grievous sins in his life-time. (Without the helps he got in the Catholic Church he would surely have committed more and worse sins). At the hour of death he calls for a priest, at whose hands he receives the Sacrament of Penance with sorrow for his sins; for he does not want to be punished for the evil he has done. By the merciful dispensation of God the Sacrament removes his guilt.

Repentance at Death

Exclusiveness—From what has been said above, it is abundantly evident that nothing can be more absurd than the statement, often thoughtlessly repeated, that it matters not at all to what religion a man belongs. *If* the Catholic claims are true, as they certainly are, all men should become Catholics, both to obey God's will in this regard and to obtain the wonderful helps to be found only in the Catholic Church.

All Religions NOT Equally Good

Enemies of the Catholic Church no less than her friends have discussed very much about what is certainly a most distinguishing characteristic of the Catholic Church, her exclusiveness, her persistent claim to be the only true Church. She does not deny that some truths are to be found in other systems also, but claims that the Catholic religion is the only religion objectively acceptable to God. She does not deny that men can attain to salvation outside its visibile fold, but says that those who succeed in doing so are Catholics in spirit and are saved

only in so far as they have been Catholics unconsciously, and that even those men who act with the best of intentions outside the Catholic Church are greatly the losers by not being Catholics. Such is the exclusiveness of the Catholic Church.

This doctrine of exclusiveness may even be said to be a cardinal tenet of the Catholic religion, and in this regard it is sharply marked off from almost every other religious body in the modern world, especially from current Hinduism and practically all of the present-day Protestant sects.

At first thought it may seem strange to some that equal opportunities to know the true Church, and hence to attain salvation more easily and securely, are not given to all men. Yet no injustice is done anyone by an unequal distribution of opportunities. Those who are lost are lost through their own fault. That some are given exceptional opportunities for salvation and for greater holiness is due to the free bounty of God, Who is free to do as He pleases with His gifts. He is not at all unjust in giving some special favours and refusing them to others, just as He was not unjust in creating the men He has actually created instead of others from an infinite number of possible beings who will never be created.

God Gives as He Wills to Give

The Bible—Some readers will be surprised that so far we have said nothing about the Bible as a Rule of Faith. Protestants, especially, oppose the Church of to-day, because she does not make the Bible the sole Rule of Faith.

As a matter of fact, the Bible is not at all essential for individual salvation according to the plan devised by Jesus Christ. It is useful and inspired * by God, and as such is held in high regard by Catholics. Still, it is something subordinate to the Church, inasmuch as the whole Bible is known to be the inspired word of God only because the Catholic Church has told us so. Without this authentic declaration by the Church as to its inspiration, the Bible would be hardly more than a unique work of history, sublime in parts, but in no way a sufficient Rule of Faith and conduct. As a historical work the Bible bears witness to the divine Church : this established, we hear the Church proclaim that the historical and all other parts of the Bible were written under the inspiration of God. The supreme Rule of Faith is the infallible teaching of the Catholic Church, which is animated by the Holy Spirit and is Christ living with us.

Bible not Sufficient

*A definition of inspiration is given in the Encyclical *Providentissimus Deus*. "The Holy Ghost, Himself, by His supernatural power, stirred up and impelled the Biblical writers to write, and assisted them while writing in such a manner that they conceived in their minds exactly, and determined to commit to writing faithfully, and render in exact language, with infallible truth, all that God commanded and nothing else."

THE LAST THINGS

Death—The principle which enables man to think and to will, which we call a soul, is a spiritual entity, without parts, as can be shown from an analysis of the nature of its functions. Hence, being essentially without parts and simple, the soul is not destined to disintegrate or to die. The soul is distinct in each man, and when it is separated from the body the man is said to be dead.

Immortality of the Soul

Catholics believe on the word of Christ's Church that they have but one life to work out their eternal destiny. A single instant is sufficient to decide an eternity and to set oneself adrift from God for ever. The fact that men usually live so many years and receive so many opportunities for setting their souls aright is an effect of the free mercy of God and not something due to them. Much less is rebirth something due to them, and probably not even expedient. Those who choose to disbelieve the Catholic Church in this matter must still act in such wise that they take no chance in a matter of such supreme importance by delaying their conversion until after death. There can be no reasonable risks when eternity is at stake.

No Transmigration

Judgment—After death there will be a private judgment for each man, in which the soul will see clearly her spiritual condition. After a period of time, which no man knows, the world will come to an end, and all men will

After Death the Judgment

learn the sins and good actions of all other men. This will take place in what is called the general judgment.

Hell—God accepts the conflict created by the bad will of sinners and sees to it that in the conflict good prevails and not evil. God cannot abandon the cause of good against evil and still remain good. Not even the sinner would benefit by the impossible that God should allow evil to triumph. Hell, then, is in a certain sense the creation of the sinner himself.

Hell the Result of Sin

What terrible remorse will engulf the soul that has turned away from God for all eternity! In this life men find their happiness is always outside of them; they soon realize that they are not self-sufficient, that they tend to God by every breath and thought. What bitter anguish, then, will engulf those who die in grievous sin when they realize that they have made it impossible for themselves to reach the infinitely beautiful and good God! This anguish is the essence of hell.

Is there some kind of fire in hell? Christ said emphatically that there is. The greatest torment of hell, however, is the realization that one is irrevocably separated from God. The all-merciful God can do nothing for a damned soul, since any token of love He might give her only serves to awaken greater resistance and remorse. For this reason, if God were to extinguish the fires of hell, He would but be adding to the indescribable sufferings of

The Greatest Punishment

the lost souls. God can no more alleviate the pains of the damned than make a square circle; for both are intrinsically impossible.

In connection with the awful truth of hell, two facts should be borne in mind. First, no one goes to hell except by his own deliberate choice; and, secondly, its existence does not depend upon one's subjective belief or disbelief. The agnostic, if he is not mad, must live in such wise that he may as soon as possible make sure of his salvation, for no one can reasonably take the risk of going to hell.

Hell Must Be Avoided

Purgatory—Those who die with their wills substantially right, but are still guilty of venial sins or bound to make some additional reparation for grievous sins already pardoned, cannot go to God without a previous purification by penance. This can be made either in this life or in an intermediate state after death called Purgatory. Purification by sufferings in Purgatory can be shortened by the prayers of good men. It is for this reason that Catholics pray frequently for the souls of the departed who may be in Purgatory, especially during the great Sacrifice of the Mass.

The State of Purification

Heaven—Heaven consists essentially in seeing God "face to face." It is a state of eternal bliss with no admixture of sorrow. As St. Paul tells us, heaven is beyond the power of words to describe.

Heaven Eternal Bliss

The Communion of Saints—Those in heaven can and do pray for the souls in Purgatory and for the members of the Catholic Church on earth. Those on earth honour those in heaven and ask their intercession with God, and, as we have just seen, pray for the souls detained in Purgatory. This bond between the members of the Catholic Church on earth and those in heaven and in Purgatory is called the Communion of Saints.

The Bond Transcending Time and Space

The Resurrection of the Body—A complete human being is composed of soul and body. It is only fitting, then, that a time should come, at the end of the world, when the bodies* of men will be re-united to their souls to share in the punishments or rewards they have earned during life.

The Body to Share

Saints—In one sense, a saint is any person who has died and gone to heaven. In a more strict sense, a saint is a person who has lived an extraordinarily virtuous life and has been declared by the Catholic Church to be certainly in heaven and deserving of public veneration.

Definition of a Saint

Any exceptionally holy Catholic may, after death, be the object of an ecclesiastical investigation to determine

* Catholics do not regard matter as something intrinsically evil. Sound when properly controlled is music, otherwise it is mere noise. Matter too may be controlled for a higher end and so be worthy of heaven.

whether he has exercised heroic virtue during his lifetime and worked undoubted miracles after his death as a sign that he is in heaven with God. The juridical process for the purpose of "canonizing" a saint is exceedingly strict and painstaking, and often lasts for centuries.

Long and Strict Process

As an example of what is meant by a Catholic saint we may take the case of St. Therese of Lisieux, a saint of our own times.

Marie Françoise Therese was the ninth and last child born into a pious family at Alençon, France, January 2, 1873. From her earliest years she manifested a great love for God and a deep affection for all the members of her family. At the age of ten she was miraculously cured of a dangerous malady by Mary, the mother of Jesus, who appeared to the little girl.

She was admitted to the Carmelite monastery at Lisieux in 1888, and there began a religious life of great fidelity in the least observances of the Rule and of surpassing fervour that was terminated only by her holy death eight and a half years later at the early age of twenty-four. She declared that her purpose in entering the monastery was "to save souls and especially to pray for priests". For the rest of her life she suffered great interior trials, and yet seemed never to suffer as much as she desired in order to show yet more her love for God. Hers was pre-eminently the way of "spiritual childhood", obeying the

Therese, a Saint at 24

Gospel injunction, "*Unless ye become as little children ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven*" (Matt. xviii, 3).

She died September 30, 1897, and was buried in a humble graveyard. Hidden from the world during her lifetime she was destined to become famous afterwards. She had predicted that after her death she would "let fall a shower of roses," and that she would spend her heaven "in doing good upon earth." How wonderfully this promise has been kept is seen from the fact that a selection from the countless records of her favours already fills seven volumes, and more are taking place daily.

A Shower of Roses

As examples of some of these miraculous favours we may give the following :—

Gabriella Trimusi, of Parma, Italy, suffered from a tuberculous lesion of a knee which proved very prejudicial to her health, and at the end of four years the spine became affected. A radiograph of the knee revealed periostitis at the head of the tibia. After joining others in prayers in honour of St. Therese she was suddenly cured by a miracle, as doctors appointed to investigate the case testified.

Maria Pellemans, suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis, which was followed by gastritis and enteritis, both of a tuberculous nature, was treated by doctors for several years without success. In March, 1923, she was

suddenly restored to perfect health while kneeling at the tomb of St. Therese. Three specially appointed doctors confirmed the fact of the cure. "In these cures the reality of the miraculous nature admitted of no doubt whatsoever......" (Pope Pius XI in the Bull of Canonization).

Catholics agree that Mary, the mother of Jesus, is the greatest saint of all, far surpassing all others in holiness. It is to her that they go, more frequently than to any other saint, to ask her intercession with her divine Son, Jesus, for temporal favours and, above all, for eternal salvation. Jesus has approved of this devotion to His mother by working innumerable miracles in all ages for those who ask her intercession before the throne of the Almighty. It is to her, too, that Catholics recommend unbelievers to go, that through her prayers to God they may in the end obtain mercy and the gift of grace from the Triune God.

Ask Mary's Intercession

APPENDIX

PRAYERS CATHOLICS SAY

The Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer—Our Father

Our Father Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen.

The Angelic Salutation—Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee ; blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

I confess to Almighty God

I confess to Almighty God, to Blessed Mary ever Virgin, to Blessed Michael the Archangel, to Blessed John the Baptist, to the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the Saints, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word and deed ; through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. Therefore I beseech Blessed Mary ever Virgin, Blessed Michael the Archangel, Blessed John the Baptist, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and all the Saints to pray to the Lord our God for me. Amen.

May the Almighty God have mercy on me, forgive me my sins and bring me to life everlasting. Amen.

May the Almighty and Merciful Lord grant me pardon, remission and absolution of all my sins. Amen.

Glory be

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

An Act of Faith

O my God, I most firmly believe all that Thou hast revealed and, through the Holy Catholic Church, proposest to be believed, because Thou art truth itself, Who canst neither deceive nor be deceived.

In this Faith I desire to live and die.

An Act of Hope

O my God, I most confidently hope, by the merits of Jesus Christ, to receive the pardon of my sins, grace to serve Thee faithfully in this life, and eternal happiness in the next, because Thou art infinitely good to us, almighty, and faithful to Thy promises.

In this Hope I desire to live and die.

An Act of Charity

O my God, I love Thee with my whole heart and soul, and above all things, because Thou art infinitely good and perfect; and I love my neighbour as myself for the love of Thee.

An Act of Contrition

O my God, I am sorry from my heart for having offended Thy infinite Goodness and Majesty; I hate and detest all my sins, because they displease Thee, my God, Who art so deserving of my love; and I firmly purpose, by Thy grace, never more to offend Thee, and to avoid the occasions of sin.

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From

The Editor, Light of the East, 30 Park Street, Calcutta.

THE LITTLE FLOWER PRESS
146, BOWBAZAR STREET,
CALCUTTA.